

SAFETY

IN NUMBERS

You could learn a lot from a dummy.

MOTORCYCLISTS

The Choices You Make Are More Important Than You Think

As a motorcyclist, you have many choices that greatly affect your safety on the road. And each choice has a consequence that could affect you and others in your life. As with any life-saving decision, it is vital that you make the best choices you possibly can.

There are personal preferences about which motorcycle to purchase – manufacturer, model, size, color. Other decisions require consideration beyond personal preference – such as helmet selection, training courses, and high-visibility protective gear. In some States, laws about helmet use and licensing guide you to make the best and safest decisions. But even if those laws do not exist in your State, consider the impact to you, your family, friends, coworkers, and community if you are seriously injured or killed in a motorcycle crash because of less-than-optimal choices about motorcycle safety gear.

15% In 2012, motorcyclists accounted for 15 percent of all traffic fatalities.

Motorcycles made up only 3 percent of all registered vehicles in the United States in 2012 and less than 1 percent of vehicle miles traveled.

\$3.4 billion Societal costs* saved by the use of motorcycle helmets in 2011

Additional societal costs that could have been saved if every rider in a crash had worn a helmet.

\$1.5 billion

1,699 lives

were saved in 2012 by motorcycle helmets.

*Societal costs include loss of life, loss of productivity, insurance payouts, hospital costs, emergency responder costs, rehabilitation costs, etc.

For more information, visit:

www.NHTSA.gov/Safety/Motorcycles



U.S. Department of Transportation
National Highway Traffic Safety
Administration

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THE PROBLEM

Dangers of Substandard Motorcycle Helmets

- NHTSA tested seven popular substandard helmets to determine how they compare to properly certified helmets.
- The results showed that substandard motorcycle helmets will not protect motorcycle riders from head impacts during crashes.
- Motorcycle riders who wear substandard helmets and believe that “something is better than nothing” have a false sense of security regarding the protection afforded them by these helmets as compared to certified helmets.
- In DOT’s test which measures energy attenuation of the helmet during specific impacts, a certified helmet is permitted to transfer no more than a 400g acceleration to a headform. Substandard helmets were shown to transfer significantly higher accelerations (636g to 992g) to the headforms during these testing impacts.



What the Data Tells Us

- In 2012, 4,957 motorcyclists were killed on the Nation’s roadways.
- There was a 33-percent increase in motorcyclist fatalities from 2003 to 2012.
- During 2012, 93,000 motorcyclists were injured—an increase of 12,000 from the previous year.
- There were 10 times as many unhelmeted motorcyclist fatalities in States **without** universal helmet laws (1,858) as in States **with** universal helmet laws (178) in 2012. These States were nearly equivalent with respect to resident population.
- In 2012, there were 19 States with universal helmet laws. The average use rate of DOT-certified motorcycle helmets was 89 percent in States with universal helmet laws, compared to 49 percent in States without universal helmet laws.
- In a study of patients admitted to a shock trauma center in Baltimore, Maryland, 50 percent of the motorcyclists wearing a substandard helmet (sometimes referred to as a novelty helmet) received a head injury compared to 23 percent of motorcyclists wearing DOT-certified motorcycle helmets.
- More than half of the motorcyclists killed across the United States in 2012 were age 40 or older.
- According to the National Roadside Survey conducted in 2007, almost 6 percent of motorcyclists are estimated to be riding while alcohol-impaired (not crash-related figures) at night. This was the largest percentage of impairment compared to drivers of passenger cars, light trucks, SUVs and vans.
- In fatal crashes in 2012, a higher percentage of motorcycle riders had blood alcohol concentrations (BAC) of .08 grams per deciliter or higher than any other type of motor vehicle driver. More than 1 in 4 (27%) motorcycle riders involved in fatal crashes were alcohol-impaired.

How to Find the Right Helmet

- 1 Look for the DOT label.**
Helmets that contain the “DOT” label are certified by manufacturers to meet minimum safety standards.
- 2 Fit is Key!**
Make sure the helmet fits securely for both the shape and size of your head. Look into adjustable pads for improved fit.
- 3 Consider facial coverage.**
Helmets that leave your face exposed cannot protect your face.
- 4 Good ventilation.**
Ventilation increases fresh air flow for cooling and reduced fogging.



THE FACTS

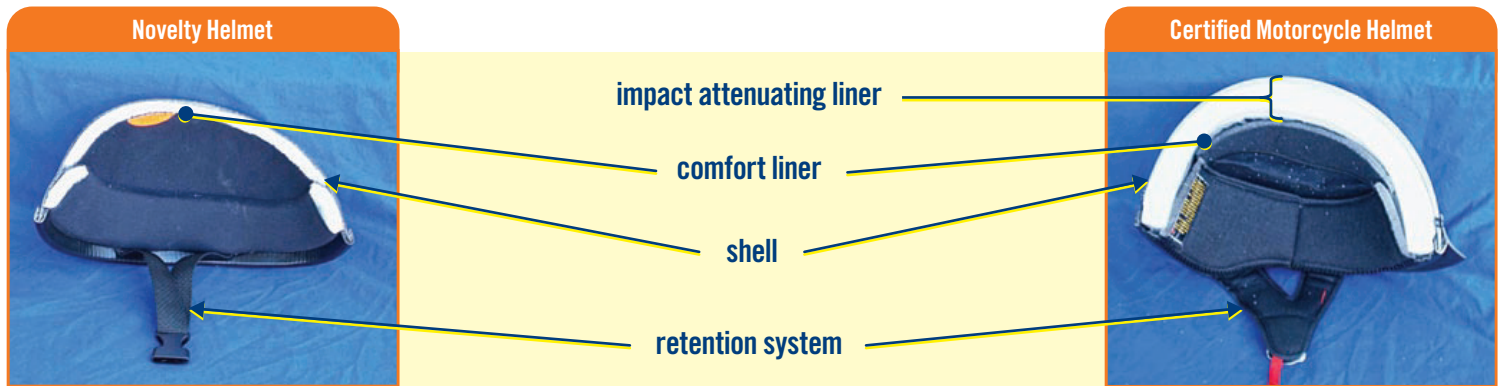


DOT Motorcycle Helmet Label

All new motorcycle helmets manufactured after May 2013 are required to meet new labeling standards. The new labels must contain the manufacturer or brand name, the model designation, the "DOT" symbol, and must state "FMVSS No. 218 Certified". This label can be found on the rear of the motorcycle helmet.



The difference between a novelty helmet and a certified motorcycle helmet.



As a motorcyclist, your safety during a crash is *your* decision.

**REQUIRED
by law**



Passenger Car crashworthiness equipment:

- Air bags – Required by law
- Seat belts – Required by law
- Structural integrity – Required by law

**YOUR
Decision**



Motorcycle crashworthiness equipment:

- DOT-certified helmet – **Your decision**
- Complete facial helmet – **Your decision**
- Protective gear – **Your decision**

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Recall News

- Go to www.odi.nhtsa.dot.gov/ subscriptions to sign up for motorcycle helmet recall e-mail alerts. Check the box for **motorcycles, helmets, and motorcycle equipment**, enter your e-mail address and click the **Select to Subscribe** button.
- If your helmet has been recalled, it is because the helmet does not meet safety requirements and is not safe to wear.
- Follow the instructions given in the recall notification, also found at www.SaferCar.gov, in order to best ensure your safety.

Motorcycle Operators

- Wear a motorcycle helmet certified to FMVSS No. 218 whenever you ride. Have an additional certified helmet available if you plan on having a passenger.
- Remember, if your face is not covered, it is not protected. A complete facial helmet provides protection for the head and face and oftentimes includes a shield that is not provided by smaller or open-face helmets.
- Wear high-visibility protective gear. High-visibility gear enables other drivers and motorcyclists to see you from a greater distance and in inclement driving conditions. Protective gear—including jackets,

pants, boots and gloves—ranges in type, and level, of protection.

- Take a motorcycle safety training course to gain the essential skills, knowledge, and behavior to be a proficient motorcycle operator. Consider taking a refresher course or a specialty riding course even if you are an experienced rider, to make your safety a lifelong priority.
- If you plan to drink alcohol, make plans ahead of time for another, sober motorcycle operator to drive your motorcycle, or leave your motorcycle somewhere safe.
- Always follow traffic laws so that your driving behavior is predictable to other vehicle drivers.

Motorcycle Passengers

- Before riding on a motorcycle, be sure you have a DOT-certified helmet to wear.
- Encourage the motorcycle operator to wear a DOT-certified helmet as well.



The safety of *everyone* on the motorcycle is important.

- Do not ride with someone who has been drinking. Alcohol adversely affects balance, sight, perception, and reaction time—to name but a few effects—which are all vital for the safe operation of a motorcycle.

Non-Motorcyclists

- Do not operate a motorcycle if you are not properly licensed for motorcycle operation.
- Encourage friends and loved ones to wear high-visibility protective gear and DOT-certified motorcycle helmets.
- When driving, watch for motorcyclists as well as cars and trucks.
- Understand that motorcycles have different turning styles, brake distances, and necessary reaction times. Give motorcyclists extra space on the road.
- Be aware that motorcyclists often downshift to slow down, which means you should not rely on their brake light to warn you to slow down.
- Know that motorcyclists intentionally weave within a lane to make themselves visible and ensure that you are aware of their presence.
- Don't litter or leave debris in the road — it creates a significant hazard for motorcyclists.

For more information, visit:

www.NHTSA.gov/Safety/Motorcycles

DOT HS 812 036

10850PRINT-061314-v3



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